GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4224
ANSWERED ON:11.08.2016
Sources of Drinking Water
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Will the Minister of DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that shortage of drinking water in rural areas is due to decreasing level of groundwater there; and
(b) if so, the details thereof and the measures being taken by the Government thereon?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION
(SHRI RAMESH CHANDAPPA JIGAJINAGI)

(a) The shortage of drinking water in the rural areas has mainly occurred due to less rainfall in many parts of the country during the last two years which has resulted in the depletion of ground water table due to inadequate recharge. As most of rural drinking water supply schemes are based on groundwater sources, this has resulted in less yield of water during summer months in few schemes in some parts of the country. In addition, inadequate rain has also resulted in depletion of water in major reservoirs in the country and this has compounded the problem of water availability for drinking purpose.

(b) Rural drinking water is a state subject. The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, is exerting joint efforts with states towards providing clean drinking water to people in the rural areas on sustained basis throughout the year under the centrally sponsored National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP). Under NRDWP, 10% of the allocation is meant for Sustainability component to be used exclusively to achieve drinking water security by adopting conjunctive use of surface water, rain water, ground water and construction of water recharging structures with major emphasis on water quality affected areas, over-exploited, critical & semi-critical areas as specified by Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), and any other area that the State Government has identified as water stressed area.

Similarly, various water conservations measures are being taken up under the flagship programmes of Centre and State under Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP), Repair, Restoration and Renovation (RRR), Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojna (PMKSY), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA), National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) and Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP).

The focus of the Ministry now is to move towards rural water supply schemes based on safe & perennial surface water sources to ensure long term sustainability of source and drinking water security in the event of crisis including drought.